

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SSM-03 IO-13 EB-08 DHA-02
IGA-02 INR-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 H-01 PRS-01 /079 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI:MGANDERSON:AID/NE/ME:JHOLTAWAY:MAR
APPROVED BY NEA:NAVELIOTES
AID/AA/NE:ADWHITE (SUB)
AID/NE/ME:NLSWEET
AID/NE/TECH:GLANGLEY
AID/NE/DP:BLANGMAID

-----280245Z 021568 /61

P R 280109Z APR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 095673

FOR CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, IS, US

SUBJECT: OPERATIONS OF U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES

REF: TEL AVIV 2301

1. PLEASE DISCUSS WITH EVRON CURRENT MFA STUDY OF VOLAG-
GOI RELATIONSHIP IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. BASED ON PAST
PERFORMANCE, WE HOPE MFA'S INTEREST IS STIMULATED BY
DESIRE TO SMOOTH OVER FRICTIONS WHICH HAVE DEVELOPED DUE
TO SOME ACTIONS OF VOLAGS AND ATTITUDES OF CERTAIN GOI
OFFICIALS. AS YOU KNOW, SINCE INCEPTION OF PROGRAM, MSW
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AND MILITARY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN SUSPICIOUS
OF AND RESENTFUL OF MESRF-FUNDED VOLAG ACTIVITIES IN OC-
CUPIED TERRITORIES. MFA, MOST PARTICULARLY EVRON PER-
SONALLY, HAS BEEN QUIET ADVOCATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF MODUS
VIVENDI WITHOUT RIGIDLY DEFINED BUREAUCRATIC RULES--
TANTAMOUNT TO GOI FIAT AND CONTROL--WHICH WOULD CHANGE
NATURE OF PROGRAMS AND PROBABLY THREATEN ITS EXISTENCE BY

PULLOUT OF AT LEAST SOME VOLAGS.

2. WE BELIEVE THE BEST APPROACH IS FOR YOU TO RAISE SUBJECT WITH EVRON IN CONTEXT OF EXPRESSING OUR HOPE THAT FRICTIONS OF RECENT PAST WILL DISAPPEAR AND ALLOW MESRF-

FUNDED VOLAG ACTIVITIES TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE AS INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY. OBVIOUSLY, WE ALL RECOGNIZE NEED FOR SOME SORT OF INFORMAL LIAISON WITH GOI, AND BELIEVE THAT, ALTHOUGH NOT CONGENIAL TO TRADITIONAL BUREAUCRATIC OUTLOOK, THIS HAS WORKED WELL IN PAST--THE EXCEPTIONS, SUCH AS THEY ARE--PROVE THE RULES. YOU MIGHT ALSO NOTE THAT WE HAVE APPRECIATED EVRON'S ACCEPTANCE THAT THESE VOLAG PROGRAMS OPERATE IN A POLITICAL/CONGRESSIONAL CONTEXT WHICH SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN OTHER MINISTRIES ARE APPARENTLY UNAWARE.

3. AFTER HEARING EVRON'S INITIAL RESPONSE, YOU SHOULD DRAW ON FOLLOWING, AS APPROPRIATE.

-- INTENT OF CONGRESS IN ESTABLISHING MESRF-FUNDED ASSISTANCE TO POPULATION OF WEST BANK AND GAZA IN 1975 WAS TO MANIFEST U.S. INTEREST IN WELFARE OF LOCAL POPULATION.

-- MESRF WAS NOT INTENDED IN ANY WAY TO INFLUENCE OR PREJUDGE OUTCOME OF MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT. PROGRAM WAS ESTABLISHED IN SPIRIT OF HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

-- U.S. VOLAGS WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN BRINGING THIS PROGRAM
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INTO EXISTENCE AND OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT CONGRESS ACCORDINGLY INTENDED THAT FUNDS ALLOCATED BY AID SHOULD BE ADMINISTERED BY AMERICAN VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.

-- ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON AT TIME OF HIS MARCH 1975 VISIT TO MIDDLE EAST COMMUNICATED USG INTENT TO ESTABLISH PROGRAM WORKING THROUGH VOLAGS RATHER THAN GOVERNMENTS THEMSELVES.

-- IT WAS USG UNDERSTANDING AT TIME OF ATHERTON VISIT, AND HAS BEEN SINCE, THAT GOI AGREED TO ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY VOLAGS IMPLEMENT PROJECTS INDEPENDENTLY OF MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE (MSW) AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

-- SINCE 1975 CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE, AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION HAVE ESTABLISHED PROJECTS IN WEST BANK AND GAZA FOR WHICH AID FUNDS HAVE BEEN OBLIGATED AND HAVE WORKED, BY AND LARGE, IN HARMONY WITH GOI AND LOCAL MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

-- AS CAN BE SEEN FROM PAST EXPERIENCE, WIDE RANGE OF ACCEPTABLE RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE ESTABLISHED. GIVEN INTENT OF CONGRESS IN CREATING MESRF PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY VOLAGS, WE BELIEVE GOI SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO JUDGE PRIORITY OF VOLAG ACTIVITIES IN LIGHT OF ITS OWN PRIORITIES. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR GOI TO VETO ACTIVI-

TIES ON GROUNDS OTHER THAN SECURITY.

-- ANERA, WHICH HAD TENDED TO OPERATE MORE INDEPENDENTLY THAN OTHER VOLAGS, HAD MODIFIED SUBSTANTIALLY ITS OPERATING PROCEDURES TO CONFORM WITH GENERAL PATTERN OF VOLAG-GOI RELATIONSHIPS. IT HAS ESTABLISHED OPERATING ARM IN JERUSALEM TO COORDINATE MORE CLOSELY ITS ACTIVITIES WITH RECIPIENT INSTITUTIONS AND GOI. PRIOR TO SUBMITTING ITS PROPOSALS TO AID, ANERA COORDINATES WITH MSW TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT ITS PLANNED ACTIVITIES ARE NOT DUPLICATIVE OF MSW-SPONSORED SOCIAL WELFARE ACTIVITIES AND ARE ACCEPTABLE TO MILITARY GOVERNMENT. FURTHERMORE, ANERA TRANSFERRED ITS OPERATING EXPENSE ACCOUNTS FROM AMMAN TO BANKING FACILITIES IN JERUSALEM IN RESPONSE TO CONCERNS EXPRESSED ABOUT PAST FINANCIAL PRACTICES.

-- WE BELIEVE MFA STUDY SHOULD BE CONCLUDED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF PROGRAM SUSPENSION BY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, WHICH COULD HAVE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON ENTIRE VOLAG PROGRAM, INCLUDING POSSIBLE ADVERSE CONGRESSIONAL REACTION TO PROSPECT OF A VOLAG'S WITHDRAWAL FROM WEST BANK/GAZA ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES UNDER PREVAILING CIRCUMSTANCES.

-- IT IS HOPE OF U.S. THAT ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECTS CAN CONTINUE TO BE PERFORMED AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED UPON BY GOI AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.

4. FYI: WE HAVE JUST BEEN INFORMED BY ANERA THAT LAVINE, MSW, TOLD THEIR REP (SELZ) ON APRIL 20 THAT MFA STUDY MIGHT RESULT IN MORE CONFINING RESTRICTIONS. LAVINE ALSO REPORTEDLY SAID CDF PROGRAM IN GAZA WAS "DEAD", AND CONVEYED DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT MSW DETERMINED TO INSIST ON "JOINT" NEGOTIATIONS AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN FUTURE MESRF-VOLAG ACTIVITIES.

5. AFTER RECEIVING YOUR REPORT OF CONVERSATION, WE WILL BE IN POSITION TO CONSIDER NEXT STEPS, IF NECESSARY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS, VOLUNTARY AGENCIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE095673
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MGANDERSON:AID/NE/ME:JHOLTAWAY:MAR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770148-0031
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977048/aaaaagts.tel
Line Count: 169
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f7dec9a8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 TEL AVIV 2301
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2875904
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPERATIONS OF U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, IS, US
To: TEL AVIV
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f7dec9a8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009